

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

SPEECH SYNTHESIS

~~Conventional methods of predicting phrase boundaries occasionally result in the output of text to speech conversion apparatus sounding unnatural. Text-to-speech conversion apparatus described herein uses pattern-matching to predict the position of phrase boundaries in its spoken output. The apparatus analyses text~~ Text input to the apparatus is analyzed to identify groups of words (known as "chunks") which are unlikely to contain internal phrase boundaries. Both the chunks and individual words are labeled with their syntactic characteristics. ~~The apparatus has access~~ Access is made to a database of sentences which also contains such syntactic labels, together with indications of where a human reader would insert minor and major phrase boundaries. The parts of the database which have the most similar syntactic characteristics are found and phrase boundaries are predicted based on the phrase boundaries found in those parts. Other characteristics ~~are~~ may also be used in the pattern-matching process.

Figure (2A)